

# BECOME A FRIEND

We invite you to support Friends of Olmsted-Beil House in our mission to preserve, protect, and present this historic site and to create an education center. Show your appreciation for the legacies of Frederick Law Olmsted and Carlton Beil and of the many others who have made this house their home!

FOBH is a 501(c)(3) organization, and all donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law.



Photo: Lance J. Reha

## SUPPORT

To become a member of FOBH or to make a donation:

- Scan this QR code:
- Visit our website:  
[olmstedbeilhouse.org/support/](http://olmstedbeilhouse.org/support/)
- Mail a check or money order to:



Frederick Law Olmsted c. 1850.  
Yosemite Research Library

*"For a critical seven-year formative period (1848-1855), Olmsted lived on Staten Island and worked on a 130-acre spread ..During his time there, he honed experience that would be essential to his later career as a landscape architect..."*

—Justin Martin, author of *Genius of Place: The Life of Frederick Law Olmsted*, Da Capo Press, 2011

You can explore Olmsted's farm, from when he lived there and now, with our Discovery Map, which illustrates some of the Staten Island locations associated with his life. The Discovery Map was created with information from Olmsted's letters, historical maps, and other sources.



Discovery Map

Email: [info@olmstedbeilhouse.org](mailto:info@olmstedbeilhouse.org)

[olmstedbeilhouse.org](http://olmstedbeilhouse.org)



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Friends of Olmsted Beil House



PROUD  
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OLMSTED  
NETWORK

10/25



Photo: Adriano Chinellato

# FRIENDS OF OLMSTED-BEIL HOUSE

*Preserving, protecting, and presenting the farmhouse where Frederick Law Olmsted lived 1848-1855*

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# FRIENDS OF OLMSTED-BEIL HOUSE

Friends of Olmsted-Beil House (FOBH) was formed in 2018 by concerned neighbors and former residents of Olmsted's farmhouse to advocate for this important site in local and national history.

The mission of FOBH is to preserve, protect, and present this historic site to the public. The ultimate goal is to create on it a vibrant education center that will welcome children and adults in the community as well as scholars and fans of Olmsted, parks, and American history.

With its eyes on that goal, FOBH has already reached out to more than one thousand students with its innovative Discover Landscape Architecture classroom program for grades 3–5. Developed by an FOBH Board member and retired educator, this program provides an introduction to the field and to Olmsted design principles.

Friends of Olmsted-Beil House is a proud member of the Olmsted Network.



Photo: Paula Tramontano

## THE HOUSE

The Olmsted-Beil House dates to 1685, when it began as a simple stone dwelling on a bluff overlooking the Raritan Bay in what is now the Eltingville section of Staten Island. Over the centuries, it has changed ownership, structure, and purpose and has borne witness to a wide swath of history. Its owners have included several notable Staten Island families, including the Poillons and Akerlys.



### Frederick Law Olmsted

In 1848, the house and surrounding farm, comprising 130 acres, were acquired by writer, social critic, and pioneering landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted. During the seven years that he lived there, Olmsted farmed, planted, and ran a nursery. He also conducted many landscape experiments that he later incorporated into his designs throughout the United States. Central Park and Prospect Park, which he co-designed with architect Calvert Vaux, are his best-known creations in New York City. During his years at the farm, Olmsted traveled to Europe and the American South and wrote influential accounts of these travels when he returned. He also befriended prominent Staten Islanders, including William Vanderbilt, father of George Vanderbilt, who thirty years later would commission Olmsted to design the grounds of Biltmore. Olmsted worked for the improvement of Staten Island, forming a county agricultural society, joining the local school board, and advocating for the construction of a plank road to reduce transportation costs. When he returned to live on Staten Island in the 1870s, he led the preparation of a report addressing a broad range of environmental issues to control development of the Island.



Photo: Lance J. Reha

### After the Olmsteds

After the Olmsted family sold the farm in 1866, the site served as a home to other families, as a boarding house, and as a resort. The last private owners, naturalist and educator Carlton Beil and his wife, Louise, sold the house and property in 2006 to the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, to be preserved in perpetuity as a New York City park.

### Today

- The Olmsted-Beil House sits in Olmsted-Beil House Park. The site is a New York City Landmark and is listed on the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places.
- The park is open to the public, and Friends of Olmsted-Beil House frequently sponsors community events there.
- Restoration of the Olmsted-Beil House has begun, with completion of a historic preservation plan. The house is currently closed to the public while it undergoes restoration.



Photo: Lance J. Reha